

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 26, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker and Leader Boehner:

On June 18, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius designated a class of Department of Energy (DOE) employees for addition to a Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), as authorized under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA). We are writing to affirm our support for this designation, which will provide an expedited procedure to deliver benefits to certain former employees at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory who have become ill due to harmful exposures at this former DOE rocket and nuclear reactor test facility.


Many former employees of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory have developed cancer and other severe illnesses as a result of exposure they experienced during their employment there. While EEOICPA established a process for workers to provide documentation demonstrating that their illnesses were caused by their work at DOE properties, it also allows for an expedited process through the SEC designation. On May 19, after 19 months of scientific review, the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health recommended that a class be added to the SEC, and Secretary Sebelius approved the designation.

Under EEOICPA, Congress has 30 days to review the Secretary's designation before the Department of Labor may begin processing claims for this cohort. No additional action is necessary for the group to be added to the SEC. We support the scientific determination of the Secretary and the NIOSH Advisory Board and ask that Congress consent to the designation and take no action to oppose it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


HENRY A. WAXMAN
Member of Congress


ELTON W. GALLEGLY
Member of Congress